

ISSUES AND CHALLENGES IN RELATION TO THE PREPARATION OF BOARD EXAMINATIONS AMONG THE HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS DURING THE COVID - CASE STUDY

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Abstract:

COVID-19 has created a sensation of panic and uncertainty all over the world. This has contributed to short and long-term consequences for children and adolescents in psychosocial and behavioral wellbeing. Many susceptibility factors, such as the age of growth, the state of schooling, pre-existing mental wellbeing, financial impairment or the risk of infection or fear of disease, define the quality and nature of minors' effect. Adolescence is a middle-age between infancy and adult growth and development as everybody between the ages of 10 and 19, the World Health Organization (WHO) describes as an adolescent. This age range is defined by the WHO as a youth, referring to persons aged 10 to 24.

Adolescents encounter psychosocial issues at one point or another during their development. During the middle adolescent period, puberty is finished for males and females. Young people continue to encounter an increasing critical thinking capability at this point. Teenagers in this developmental period are experiencing many social and cognitive transitions, including greater self-implication and a stronger desire to independence. Most students around the world equate the end of the school year with high-stakes exams. These are commonly used to pick or certify students as they progress through the educational system (or into the workforce).

Exams typically play a significant equity role in limiting the impact of patronage and increasing access to educational opportunities for disadvantaged students. The biggest effect teens feel is school closures, being at home with family members, and not seeing friends and classmates. Teenagers have distinct developmental needs than adults. These challenges faced by adolescence during their board exams can be seen further. The researcher decided to do a case study by interviewing mid-adolescence students of age group (14-15 years) with the individual difference to understand better the psychological effects of the COVID-19 pandemic, such as fear, depression, and stress while preparing for board exams. In this study, a case study method is used, and the sampling techniques such as snow bowling, observation, narration etc., are used. The COVID-19 pandemic presents a threat to teenage mental health.

KEYWORDS: Adolescents, psychological, behavioural, developmental period, board exam, educational system, family members.

INTRODUCTION:

Learning or acquiring intelligence, talents, ideas, principles, attitudes, and behaviours facilitated by education. Teaching, instruction, storytelling, debate, and guided study are all examples of instructional approaches. While most education takes place under the supervision of instructors, learners may also teach themselves. Education can occur in formal and informal contexts, and any event that has a formative impact on one's thoughts, feelings, or actions can be called educational. The word pedagogy refers to the instructional technique. Universal and compulsory education for all children in the age group of 6-14 was a cherished dream of the Republic of India's new government. The National Policy on Education, 1986 and the Programme of Action (POA) 1992 proposed free and compulsory education with good quality for all children below 14 years before the 21st Century.

In India, education is overseen by both the Union Government and the states, with the Union bearing some duties and gaining autonomy. The Indian Constitution recognises education as a constitutional right in numerous documents. In India, universities are under the jurisdiction of either the Union or the State governments.

EDUCATION:

Education is a critical part of one's life. It is the secret to future prosperity and a plethora of possibilities in our lives. People benefit from education in a variety of ways. It illuminates a person's mind and thought, for example. It assists students in preparing for jobs or pursuing higher education by university graduation. Training in a particular field helps individuals think, feel, and act in ways that lead to their progress and increase their happiness and community. Education also helps to form a person's personality, emotions, and social abilities. It also allows people to brace for life's challenges. People gain a special place in their own culture and wherever they live as a result of it. All have the right to an education "from the cradle to the grave." There are many advantages of getting a good education, including a good job, a good social standing, and self-confidence.

SCHOOL:

A school is a type of educational facility that provides learning spaces and environments for students' instruction (or "pupils") by teachers. Most nations have standardised education schemes, which are often mandatory. Students advance through a sequence of school. These schools' names differ, but they usually include primary school for young children and secondary school for adolescents who have finished primary school. A university is a college that teaches higher education.

Schools are the underlying basis for a child's knowledge. It offers children a chance to learn in different education fields, including people, art, history, maths, politics and many other topics. An individual is best able to serve others by gaining information. For, e.g., if you learn algebra, you can measure your taxes quickly and rapidly. You may also draw interest by participating actively in the debate with better knowledge.

School is necessary to create a literate and prosperous society, as America acknowledges. Enhanced demographic potential in diverse fields of information to read and have critical information allows them to become more productive members of the community. Schools enhance strategic thinking skills, examine various experiences and reach deadlines that are vital to a population.

Schools also offer ways for students to connect with others who are not like them. In some instances, a student's family and even neighbourhood may seem to be pretty standardised. Schools provide students with a realistic framework in which to collaborate with others who are different from them. Every day, students of diverse cultures, ethnicities, faiths, physical skills, and analytical abilities share space and learn to collaborate on shared interests and have constructive conversations. It is beneficial as humanity strives to be more aware of the interests of others. The school system in India has four levels: lower primary (age 6 to 10), upper primary (11 and 12), high or secondary (13 to 15) and higher secondary (17 and 18).

TEACHER:

A Teacher is a person who teaches or instructs, especially as a professional; instructor. The teacher has a significant impact on the lives of the students in their classes. Teachers are most well-known for their part in teaching the students entrusted to them. Teachers can play a variety of other positions in the classroom. Teachers set the tone in their classrooms by creating a welcoming atmosphere, mentoring and nurturing pupils, serving as role models, and listening for and looking for signs of trouble.

ADOLESCENCE:

Adolescence is the period of maturity and growth that occurs between childhood and adulthood. Any person between the ages of 10 and 19 is considered an adolescent by the World Health Organization (WHO). This age demographic comes under the WHO's definition of young adults, which encompasses those aged 10 to 24. On the other hand, adolescence is also equated with puberty and the cycle of physical changes that lead to reproductive maturity in many cultures. In different cultures, adolescence is characterised in more broad terms that include psychological, social, and moral dimensions of maturation and the purely physical aspects. Adolescence, which is approximately similar to the term adolescents in these cultures, refers to the era between the ages of 12 and 20.

Some experts believe that puberty challenges have underestimated and that the maturation period is mainly calm and untroubled for many teenagers. Other scholars consider puberty to be a demanding and sometimes frustrating developmental stage distinguished by complex behaviours. Researchers suggest adolescence undergo three primary developmental stages of youth and young adulthood --early adolescence, middle adolescence, and late adolescence/young adulthood.

ROLE OF SCHOOL AND TEACHERS IN HANDLING ADOLESCENCE

School life can be characterised as complicated and multi-faceted. In education, a variety of realms are concerned, including classroom social and learning dynamics. Classrooms are seen as social environments in which teenage experiences take place in the school environment. Adolescents' social and emotional transition, commitment, academic motivation, and learning are all affected by their experiences with teachers and peers in these social environments (Corso, Bundick, Quaglia, & Haywood, 2013; Wentzel, 1999). Furthermore,

constructive and trusting interactions with teachers and peers foster a sense of school identity in youth, encouraging cooperative participation in classroom and school events. Aside from teachers and friends, households are the primary source of socialisation for school-aged children. The family's involvement and attitudes toward education positively influence a student's sense of belonging at school.

Family engagement, according to research, helps students identify with their schools and teachers, and these students are more likely to report feeling welcomed and encouraged by the school community. (Clark, 1983; Jose et al., 2012; Law, Cuskelly, & Carroll, 2013; Osterman, 2000; Wickery, 2010).

The bulk of research on school belonging has concentrated on the teacher-student relationship (Booker, 2004). Positive teacher-adolescent interactions have shown to predict improvements in motivation, sense of identity, school commitment, success expectations, and ideals, as well as participation, initiative, and efficiency (Giani & O'Guin, 2010; Goh & Fraser, 1998; Goodenow, 1993; Murdock, 1999; Sullivan, Riceio, & Reynolds, 2008; Wentzel, 1998). Before expecting teenagers to experience a sense of belonging to the broader school group, Wentzel (1999) suggested that the first form a relationship with their teacher. Beyond the support of parents and friends, research has shown that teacher support can have the most direct impact on teen participation (Connell & Wellborn, 1991; Murray & Greenberg, 2000; Newmann, 1992; Wentzel, 1998).

COVID-19 AN IMPACT ON EDUCATION

Due to the rapid spread of coronavirus in the country, the shutdown of all educational institutes has impacted India's entire education sector. The most vital public policy tool for developing skills is going to school. Although school can be enjoyable and can improve social skills and knowledge, the primary economic benefit of being in school is enhancing a child's potential. Even a brief absence from school affects ability creation.

The COVID-19 epidemic infected people from all walks of life, with people being asked to self-quarantine in their homes to prevent the virus from spreading. The lockdown had a significant impact on mental health, resulting in psychiatric issues such as anger, stress, and depression. We surveyed 1182 people of various ages from various educational institutes in Delhi - National Capital Region (NCR), India, to learn more about the pandemic's effects on students' lives. COVID-19 has the following impact on students of various ages, time spent on self-study and online courses, the medium used for learning, sleeping habits, daily fitness routine, and the subsequent effects on weight, social life, and mental health.

Students of all ages have been affected by this accelerated evolution on such a vast scale. The disease's dissemination, travel bans, and the closing of educational facilities worldwide are projected to significantly impact students' schooling, social lives, and mental well-being. The Covid-19 epidemic has had a more substantial adverse effect on students from lower socioeconomic backgrounds. Students' academic lives have been interrupted by a decrease in family income, insufficient access to digital resources, and the high cost of internet bandwidth. Furthermore, 1.5 billion students worldwide are currently deprived of basic education, which negatively affects their mental health. Changes in everyday routine, such as a lack of outdoor exercise, disrupted sleeping habits, and social isolation, have also affected students' mental health.

BOARD EXAMS DURING COVID- 19

Board exams in the 10th and 12th grades are known as the basis for a student's potential progress. These tests' trends and assessment requirements are constantly updated to train candidates for a rigorous higher education. The Covid-19 Pandemic has led to students' stress studying for the 2021 Board Exams without classroom instruction.

No matter how small the curriculum is, there is still a concern in many people about the content, gaining knowledge, grades etc. However, students who will appear on boards in 2021 will be making history because they have perfected online learning expertise in recent years by having access to research materials online and offline and reduced social interaction with their fellow students. This year's board exams would be an unspoken battle between time, experience, and each student's intuition, with social distancing being the new standard and online test series serving as the sole judge for their readiness. The respondents' main worries were the difficulty about when tests will be held and the risk of getting behind in their studies and wasting this precious moment in their lives. Exam anxiety seems to be very prevalent among older teens. Many of the school aged respondents were preparing for national education board assessments and appeared concerned about their upcoming exams, outcomes, and educational advancement. As a result, they are unable to attend school and miss their peers.

NEED AND SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

More than 188 countries, encompassing around 91% of enrolled learners worldwide, closed their schools to contain the virus's spread. School closures have a genuine impact on all students, especially on the most vulnerable ones who are more likely to face additional barriers. Children and youth from low-income and single-parent families; immigrant, refugee, ethnic minority and Indigenous backgrounds; with diverse gender, identities and sexual orientations; and those with special education needs suffer by being deprived of physical learning opportunities,

social and emotional support available in schools and extra services. They risk falling further behind and becoming isolated with school doors closed. These students are likely to lose the most in terms of educational outcomes and schools' support. During this pandemic, student faced psychological problems due to virtual class regarding cognitive ability, psychosocial and emotional problems to attaining board examinations. So the researcher decided to do the research on the adolescent children challenges for preparing the board exam among the high and higher secondary school students.

DESCRIPTIVE ANALYSIS

CASE STUDY-1

- o Name: SHEIK ASAD HUSSAIN
- o Age: 15 Years
- o Grade:10
- o School: Sri Chaitanya international school.
- o Type Of School: Coeducation
- o Management Of School: Private
- o Board Of Education: CBSE
- o School Location: Urban
- o Does School has a psychologist to Manage the student during the crisis: yes
- o Is sufficient teachers available to Take Virtual Classes: yes
- o Are Teacher Equipped With Ict: yes
- o Father: SHEIK SAJJAD HUSSAIN
- o Educational Qualification: P.HD
- o Occupation: RAAS biosciences
- o Income: Above 1 lakh
- o Mother: SHEIK RAZIYA
- o Educational Qualification: B.A.
- o Occupation: Home maker
- o Income: NIL
- o Home Location: Urban
- o Siblings: SHEIK AHAD HUSSAIN(Elder Brother)
- o Qualification: B.Arch

Sheik Asad Hussain is a 15years old boy in grade10. He belongs to an educated family and economically well off. His father was a P.hd scholar and handling the manufacturing of Aqua medicines, and his mother was a graduate, a homemaker. He is a badminton player and also a swimmer. Ahad Hussain is his elder brother who is pursuing B.Arch. He is an excellent helping heart and mingles with others easily. He uses to tell jokes and sing in his free time.

RESULTS AND INTERPRETATIONS

COGNITIVE

Virtual learning is home-based. It has given more flexibility and comfort to the student. He has improved the digital skills and feels less stressed than an offline. His everyday life during covid on virtual classroom learning faces distraction during classes is the main concern. While writing online exam, connectivity issue is a big concern. The uploading of answer sheets within the stipulated time and in proper format leads to stress. The student lacks concentration due to environmental disturbances in a home atmosphere; despite all the measures taken to enhance honesty, cheating/ malpractices cannot be avoided.

The exam pattern has cut short and made easy because students' normal evaluation cannot be done. To perceive subject knowledge through the virtual classroom is sufficient to meet out the needs to write Board Exams. The expectations of my child during the virtual classroom regarding Subjects are interactive learning. Peer learning is considered an excellent tool for increasing subject knowledge.

PSYCHOSOCIAL

Asad's parent's anxiety towards Academic Achievement in Board Exam and reaching his goal during this pandemic season are to get good marks. It is a crucial point to choose what group to take in higher secondary classes. He used to play games on the phone, other than that quizzes that's more time spent on studies, attending

online courses, home tuitions preparing for tests etc. Appearing for the board exam, the student feels anxious that he might have connectivity issues or trouble logging into the exam portal. Portions for board exams is pretty vast, so student he is stressed and think if he can complete the syllabus studying on time. As a parent, I am anxious about how my son will attend board exams and how he will manage the best of his abilities. The parent is aware of most of its subjects and virtual classes going on.

EMOTIONAL

The student feels the disappointment of not attending the practical classes and academic training in life. It is difficult to connect directly to the subject's beneficial effect and feels like missing out lab facilities and hands-on experiences. The exam pattern has changed due to online virtual learning and its confidence level going down on the exam question paper pattern. The student manages his anxiety level at home by doing physical exercises, activities, riding a bicycle, chat with family, etc. During the lockdown, he becomes stressed. The anxiety and panic on how he is going to improve his knowledge for further studies revolved around.

Sometimes he feels hope in writing board exams in online mode, but he becomes very emotional as the challenges are high during internet connectivity. As a parent, the most challenging task while our child attends the virtual class and exam face other apps' distractions while attending online courses. The challenges faced by the parent during this pandemic for appearing Board Exam are lack of experience, proper handwritten or printed notes as everything is online. As a parent its duty to handle the child's frustration for writing the Board Exam during a pandemic as it is a crucial turning point, such as by encouraging him to involve himself in hobbies like art, cycling, carom etc.

CASE STUDY-2

- Name: Shaik Ashad Ahmed
- Age: 15 Years
- Grade: 10
- School: Sri Chaitanya International school
- Type Of School: Co education
- Management Of School: Private o Board Of Education: CBSE
- School Location: Urban
- Does School has a psychologist to manage the student during the crisis: yes
- Is Sufficient Teachers Available To Take Virtual Classes: yes
- Are Teacher Equipped With ICT: yes
- Father: Shaik Shammi Ahmed
- Educational Qualification: B.E.
- Occupation: Civil engineer
- Income: Above 1 lakh
- Mother: Shaik Shanwaz
- Educational Qualification: B.E.
- Occupation: Home maker
- Income: Nil
- Home Location: Urban
- Siblings: Nil
- Qualification: Nil

Ashad Ahmed is a 15 years old boy in grade 10. He belongs to an economically medium section family. Both his parents were educated. His father was a Civil Engineer and handling mini projects of construction of high rise buildings. His mother was a graduate and homemaker. Ashad Ahmed was an only child, so he was a pampered child. He got full attention from his parents, both mother and father. He was put in an international school to gain more knowledge, and his parents aim to send him abroad for higher studies. In academics, he was an average student.

He usually spends his time on games using a phone or laptop. He has not shown much interest in his studies, so his parents have arranged home tuition. A sir used to come to his home and teach him all the subjects. He gets shallow marks, and his parents are very much afraid of it as education plays a significant role in his future life. He is a good and friendly boy and mingles with others easily, and he has a great family background with uncles and aunts grandma in the same locality.

Every weekend they used to you go out to their uncle's house or any other places. He is a disciplined helpful, obedient boy. During the covid situation, as everybody faced the economic crisis, their family too face the financial crisis due to lockdown of his father's work, and so he too got disturbed by these issues. Both mother and

father are a soft natured person and him also the same.

RESULTS AND INTERPRETATION

COGNITIVE

Virtual learning is a learning mode through online using gadgets such as mobile phone, laptop, desktop, tab, etc. From the comfort of home and parents, learning can happen. Virtual learning is exciting as it's full of exciting activities. Online learning needs full of internet and data. During covid-19, how much data will be required for attending online classes is not known. Due to this, he used to face the disconnection of classes. As he is an only child, there is no bother about the gadgets. He has his gadget laptop. An online exam is new to him, as everybody has, it is complicated for him to write the exam and finish on time, and the uploading of answer sheets is also an issue as it uses new apps and new methods. As he is a slow learner, he becomes very stressed while writing online exam.

As term test marks are considered as internals, he is agitated to write exam in online mode, as it takes more time and he cannot see the questions correctly and choose the options he wants to write. He used to attend online tuition, who used to take classes for him and give him proper notes according to his capacity, so it does not cause a big issue for him to get messages. He also has subject knowledge. The only thing is he does not want to do hard work, whatever comes to his mind, he uses to write accordingly.

The subject's knowledge is good, but he doesn't need to improve it more due to laziness or mind deviation reasons.

As the board exams are near, he wants to get good marks. He thought of doing some hard work to make his parents happy by getting good marks in board exams. As part of the parents concern regarding the subjects for their son, they had arranged for tuition, and they use to contact him regularly to know about their sons academic status and how much he has prepared in each subject to appear for the board exam. Ashad Ahmed has the subject knowledge, and feels difficulty in understanding the maths.

PSYCHOSOCIAL

During covid-19, Ashad Ahmed undergoes different extracurricular activities Such as coding, quizzes, drawing for the school magazine, etc. As he was well aware of using gadgets, he used to google meet with his friends, and they had fun chat-chatting and seeing their faces. Some of his friends are not aware of online applications in a virtual classroom. In that case, he used to help them and explain to them about it. His parents were very stressed because the whole day goes on gadgets, before covid-19 he used to go to school and during his free time he used to play games on the phone but now as he is very interested in gadgets, he is fully involved in it the whole day. His parents want to get it out online and very much fear about his health, eyesight, etc.

His parents are also anxious about how he will achieve in this board exam during this pandemic situation with all schools and learning online sometimes; they feel that he will do good and excel in the board exam as he is attached to virtual mode. His wish is to make his parents happy by getting good marks in the board exam. They have more Expectations for him and as his family surrounding was big. His parents have to face the family situation with good marks. Otherwise, they feel inadequate to meet them. He was expecting an easy question paper in this board exam. Most of the students must not have attended the classes regularly online and had other internet issues.

As parents feel the child's sense in a virtual classroom, the desire to learn through virtual classrooms makes them know more as they can learn at their own pace. No stress on homework, test from teachers etc., so he is happy with online classes, and his parents are aware of his types timings and the subjects what he's going to appear in this board exam.

They used to check with his tuition master now and then about each issue and each topic on a particular subject on how much he has gained knowledge and how much he has to improve. This makes the child development on the parent's role to bring him up in a promising career.

EMOTIONAL

Attending practical classes is the best way of getting hands-on experience for each child the virtual classroom lack these practical classes this is one of the drawbacks of the virtual classroom. The students used to enjoy the valuable learning method and also understand the concept easily And quickly. As he likes the practical classes, he becomes very stressed, disappointed missing losing his practical courses. Ashad Ahmed sometimes feels confident about writing it board exams because His family was much concerned about marks. Due to Corona lockdown being at home one long year preparing for board exams makes them more anxious, and He got relieved by chatting with his friends and Game playing videogames.

Some of the mental health difficulties faced during this lockdown are stress, low income. Hope to write board exam through the virtual classroom as he is used to it. The parent most challenging task is to make a child attend the virtual class to take notes of what the teacher teaches in the class, and during the online exam, time

management is also a challenging task for the child to finish the exam and upload it. The challenges faced during the pandemic for appearing board exam of the child to make him feel the exam's seriousness as it indicates the future career make him practice more sums. The child often gets frustrated due to a lack of outdoor activities. As the child and parents used to visit their uncles or go out every weekend, he became very eager to be supported due to lock door and lack of outside food ordering.

CONCLUSION

This study has several social and psychological implications. In particular, the results underline that the COVID-19 emergency has undoubtedly had a significant impact on adolescents' lifestyle and psychological well-being. In light of these findings, the physical and mental effects of the COVID-19 epidemic on children and adolescents is a matter of fundamental importance both for governments and families. It cannot be neglected, especially in this phase of a progressive resumption of ordinary life.

Therefore, it is necessary to prepare adequate strategies to support the youth population in addressing the uncertainty associated with the pandemic and the quarantine period to reduce the psychological impact of school closures and home confinement as much as possible and guarantee adequate support to deal with the return to school. COVID-19 has been associated with adolescents' mental health changes, especially the fear of COVID-19 in a population with adequate exposure of COVID-19 was proved to create adverse mental health conditions such as anxiety and depression.

Adolescents who had experienced previous trauma with social isolation/quarantine and loneliness were more prone to anxiety and depression during and even after the enforced isolation ends. On the other hand, some protective factors were found to help adolescents stay away from any mental health adverse impacts due to COVID-19. Physical-psychosocial support provision, adequate and accurate information from a credible source about COVID-19, and good motivation to obey physical distancing have decreased the likelihood of negative mental health changes in adolescent.

Through this systematic review, psychiatrist, paediatrician, parents, or other parties who accompany or take care of adolescents hopefully can raise awareness to detect mental health changes to decrease adverse mental health impacts in adolescents' future. Further study needs to be done to find other factors associated with mental health changes besides fear of COVID-19 and social distancing.

These different results showed that many factors might affect the rise of depressive and anxiety symptoms in adolescents in the COVID-19 pandemic era. The challenges of online learning coupled with a lack of recreational activities that can be done at home can prove to be frustrating for children.

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